protests marking the Seattle WTO Ministerial meeting in December, 1999.

Mr. Speaker, George Becker's success as a labor leader has been because of his intelligence, skills, and tenacity. Because of all of those attributes and above all, because he has never forgotten where he came from, his career has improved the lives of millions of American workers and their families. I hope my colleagues will join me in congratulating Steelworkers union president George Becker upon his retirement and for a lifetime of dedicated service to not only the men and women of his beloved Steelworkers union, but all working men and women.

SALUTING THE TUSKEGEE AIRMEN

HON. STEVE ISRAEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 28, 2001

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, February marks Black History Month and its arrival has afforded us the opportunity to spotlight some of the most courageous men in our nation's history. I am referring to the Tuskegee Airmen, African-Americans who were asked to simultaneously fight the institutionalized segregation of their homeland and the battle hardened pilots fielded by the Luftwaffe of dreaded Nazi Germany.

On the very site where some nine thousand Republic Thunderbolt fighters were built during World War II, a permanent tribute has been created by the American Airpower Museum in Farmingdale, Long Island that salutes the valor and sacrifice of the Tuskegee Airmen. A full size replica of their P–51 fighter welcomes the museum visitor and helps explain the story of these amazing airmen.

I was honored and pleased to be able to join members of the Tuskegee Airmen, and the many friends of Republic Airport and my constituents in dedicating this exhibit during Black History Month.

Tuskegee Airmen flew more than 15,500 sorties and completed nearly 1,600 missions and they are credited with never losing an American bomber to enemy fighters while flying escort. This tribute at the American Airpower Museum at Republic will forever remind us that racism did not deter these brave men from serving their country, defending our freedoms and protecting our future.

In addition, credit must be offered to two companies that came forward to underwrite this effort—Equal and Avirex—whose support made this tribute possible. These firms reflect the type of public-private partnership that is ensuring our nation's heritage is preserved, protected, and celebrated. I congratulate them for their efforts and publicly salute their commitment to this task.

The remarks of Lee Archer, a Tuskegee Airman ace who is credited with five kills, will ring forever at this historic defense plant. He repeated the words of fellow African-American Air Force pilot Chappie James, ''you agitate, you demand, you argue but when the country is in trouble you hold her hand.''

JANUARY 31, 2001 SPEECH TO THE UNIVERSITIES RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

HON. SHERWOOD L. BOEHLERT

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 28, 2001

Mr. BOEHLERT. Mr. Speaker, I had the honor to present my maiden speech as Chairman of the House Science Committee to the Universities Research Association on January 31, 2001.

In my remarks, I outlined my goals and initial priorities for the 107th Congress. As I said in the speech: I want to ensure that we have a healthy, sustainable and productive R&D establishment—one that educates students, increases human knowledge, strengthens U.S. competitiveness and contributes to the well-being of the nation and the world. With those goals in mind, I intend to concentrate initially on three priorities—science and math education, energy policy and the environment—three areas in which the resources and expertise of the scientific enterprise must be brought to bear on issues of national significance.

Mr. Speaker, for the information of my colleagues, I submit herewith the full text of my remarks into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

CONGRESSMAN SHERWOOD BOEHLERT (R–NY) SPEECH TO UNIVERSITIES RESEARCH ASSOCIATION—JANUARY 31, 2001

It's a pleasure to be with you this morning. This is actually my first speech as chairman of the House Science Committee, so I want to use this opportunity to give you a general sense of where I hope to take the Committee. You can think of this ''maiden speech'' as a kind of experiment—if it works, you'll be the only people to have heard these themes when they were fresh; if it doesn't work, you'll be the only people to have heard them—period.

Actually, though, after serving on the Committee for 18 years and having worked with many of you, the issues before the Science Committee are hardly virgin territory for me.

I even think I know the recipe for becoming a popular chairman. My formula was prompted by Clark Kerr's famous advice on how to become a popular university president. He said that to be successful at running a university you just had to provide three things—''football for the alumni, parking for the faculty and sex for the students.'' Committees are supposed to be a bit more tame, so I figure the three things I have to provide to be popular are: press coverage for the Members, parking for the staff, and money for the scientific community.

I do indeed intend to provide those three items, but I want to go beyond that. I want to build the Science Committee into a significant force within the Congress and, with that momentum, I want to ensure that we have a healthy, sustainable, and productive R&D establishment—one that educates students, increases human knowledge, strengthens U.S. competitiveness and contributes to the well-being of the nation and the world.

With those goals in mind, I intend to concentrate initially on three priorities—science and math education, energy policy and the environment—three areas in which the resources and expertise of the scientific enterprise must be brought to bear on issues of national significance.

Education is perhaps the most pressing dilemma of the three. I imagine that by now we can all recite the litany of evidence that our education system is not performing adequately—particularly—but not exclusively—at the K–12 level. There are the TIMSS surveys showing that U.S. students lag behind their peers in other nations. There is the predominance of foreign students in our graduate programs. There is our continual need to increase the number of H–1B visas to meet our employment needs. There is the underrepresentation of women and minorities in science and mathematics. And the list goes on and on.

The evidence is easy to adduce because it's been familiar for so long. In fact, I dare say, the concerns have not changed appreciably since I first joined the Science Committee in 1983. Unfortunately, a familiar list of solutions doesn't spring as readily to our lips.

Now, I hope you won't be surprised to learn that I don't have a ready set of solutions. I have not been holding back on providing answers all these years just so I could offer them up the moment I became chairman. What I do have is a set of questions that I hope will frame the Committee's agenda as we put together an education program, in concert with the Administration and other House committees.

Here are some of my questions. First, how can we attract more top students into science and math teaching?

This is a fundamental question. No curriculum, no piece of technology, no exam is going to cure our education ills if we don't have teachers who are conversant with the subject matter they are teaching, and who can communicate their excitement and their comfort, to the students. I think scholarships are part of the answer, but clearly we need something move systemic.

Second, how can we ensure that technology actually improves education? The government's focus needs to shift from merely providing access to technology to figuring out how to use it in a manner that truly offers education, not distraction or empty entertainment or even mere information.

Third, how can we use exams in a way that promotes critical thinking, retention of knowledge and a love of learning? The current mania for measurement is a necessary antidote to an era marked by a lack of accountability. But the wrong kinds of tests will not only mask evidence of a continuing decline; they could contribute to it.

This isn't a speech on education policy, so I'll leave the matter there, for now—except to say that the question I've raised—and indeed the entire national discussion about education—must be of active concern to your institutions.

And one of my goals will be to find new ways to draw on the resources of our great research universities to help answer the kinds of questions that I just posed. The partnership between universities and industry has grown markedly closer in recent years; the relationship between universities and our nation's school systems must do the same.

Universities can also play a role in addressing my second priority area—energy policy. Clearly, as President Bush has said, we need a comprehensive energy policy that looks at all aspects of supply and demand, in both the short- and long-term.

But my focus will be on ensuring that we concentrate sufficiently on alternative sources of energy—wind, solar, fuel cells, etc.—and on conservation and efficiency. These are areas that have been underfunded in terms of both research and deployment.